

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 05504 161852Z

41

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6409

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AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY OSLO

USMISSION NATO

USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 5504

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: UPCOMING REFORM PACKAGE

REF: MADRID 5488

1. A KNOWLEDGEABLE GOVERNMENT SOURCE GAVE US AN ADVANCE
RUNDOWN ON SOME OF THE MAJOR ASPECTS IN THE NEW GOS' PROGRAM
TO BE ANNOUNCED THIS EVENING. IN HIS UNDERSTANDING, GENERAL
AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED LAST NIGHT, BUT THE POLITICAL AND
ECONOMIC SECTIONS WERE BEING FLESHED OUT, WHICH LED TO
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PAGE 02 MADRID 05504 161852Z

POSTPONEMENT OF THE PROJECTED TIME OF ANNOUNCEMENT UNTIL THIS

EVENING. DESPITE PRESS REPORTS, HE DISCOUNTED THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE DELAY HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH MAJOR DIFFICULTIES.

2. HE HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--SOME ANNOUNCEMENT, NOW THAT THE PENAL CODE REFORM WAS THROUGH, OF AN AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS (THOUGH NOT THOSE IMPLICATED IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES) TO BE GRANTED BY THE KING UPON THE OCCASION OF THE RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES AT SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA THE 25TH OF THIS MONTH.

--A CHANGE IN THE PROJECTED SHAPE OF THE REFERENDUM FROM ENDORSEMENT OF THE COMPLEX PACKAGE PROPOSED BY THE ARIAS GOVERNMENT, REQUIRING FIRST CORTES APPROVAL AND THEN VOTER APPROVAL OF A COMPLEX AND DETAILED SET OF LAWS WITH RESPECT TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT AND THE SUCCESSION.

--INSTEAD, THERE WOULD BE A MUCH SIMPLER PROPOSITION- YET TO BE DRAFTED - TO BE PUT TO THE CORTES (SIMILAR TO THAT SUGGESTED BY MEILAN GIL), WITH IMPLEMENTATION TO BE DONE BY DECREE LAW. (MADRID 5488.)

--THE RETENTION IN THE REFERENDUM OF THE PROPOSITION ESTABLISHING IN GENERAL TERMS TRADE UNION FREEDOMS.

--AND, PERHAPS, THE ELIMINATION AT THIS TIME OF ANY PROPOSITION DEALING DIRECTLY WITH THE MONARCHY, SUCH AS THE LAW OF SUCCESSION.

3. HE SAID THAT THE SUAREZ GOVERNMENT, BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULTIES THAT ATTENDED ITS FORMATION, HAD A PROBLEM - AND RECOGNIZED IT - IN TERMS OF ESTABLISHING ITS AUTHORITY OVER THE PROCESS. PRIOR TO ARIAS' DISMISSAL, THERE WERE ALREADY PLENTY OF DOUBTS ABOUT THE WISDOM OF APPROACHING THE REFERENDUM IN THE WAY THE ARIAS GOVERNMENT CONTEMPLATED IT. THE CONFUSED MESS IN THE CORTES OVER THE PENAL CODE, AND THE DISCONTENT IN THE CORTES AT FERNANDEZ MIRANDA'S LEADERSHIP, HAD RENDERED THAT INSTITUTION MUCH LESS MANAGABLE IN TERMS OF PASSING ANY DETAILED REFORM PACKAGE. THUS IT SEEMED NECESSARY, NOT ONLY IN RESPECT OF THE VOTERS, BUT IN RESPECT OF THE CORTES MEMBERS, TO PRESENT THEM WITH A MUCH SIMPLER PROPOSITION. HE ADDED THAT

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MADRID 05504 161852Z

THE DATE OF THE REFERENDUM MIGHT WELL BE ADVANCED FROM MID-OCTOBER TO LATE-SEPTEMBER (THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE) SINCE SUAREZ' PRINCIPAL PREOCCUPATION LAY IN GETTING A POPULAR MANDATE THAT WOULD ESTABLISH LEGITIMACY FOR THE PROCESS AND CLEAR UP THE CONFUSION WHICH THREATENED, OVER TIME, TO SAP THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOS AND MONARCHY.

4. HE TERMED THE RESURGENCE OF THE RIGHT, WHICH FED ON OBSTREPEROUS BEHAVIOR OF THE LEFT (E.G., THE DEMONSTRATIONS OF LAST WEEKEND DESIGNED TO PROVE IN THE PUBLIC EYE THAT AMNESTY WAS BEING FORCED FROM THE GOVERNMENT) THE BIGGEST PROBLEM.

5. IN OTHER MATTERS, WE SHOULD NOTE THAT SUAREZ-
IN AN ACT OF DIALOGUE WITH THE OPPOSITION MET YESTERDAY
WITH RUIZ GIMENEZ AND GIL ROBLES OF THE OPPOSITION CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS AND OSORIO HAS MET WITH OTHER OPPOSITION FIGURES.
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